

IN THE SPECIFICATION:

Supplemental to the amendments to the specification made in the October 13, 2005 Amendment, please replace the Summary of Invention section on page 2, line 16 through page 9, line 9 with the following amended section:

--According to one aspect of the invention, an image reading apparatus, connected to a plurality of ~~image-forming~~ external printing apparatuses via a network, includes: (1) generation means for reading an image and generating an image signal ~~on the basis of reading the image~~; (2) selection means for selecting one from the plurality of ~~image-forming~~ external printing apparatuses ~~for receipt of the generated image signal~~; (3) input instruction reception means for receiving an input instruction indicating whether or not the input of user management information is necessary from the selected external printing from the selected image-forming apparatus; (4) ~~determination means for determining whether or not the input of the user management information is necessary, in accordance with the received input instruction~~; (5) input control means for controlling the input of the user management information so as to be inputted in accordance with the instruction ~~result of the determination by the determination means~~; (6)(5) output means for outputting the inputted user management information to the selected ~~image-forming~~ external printing apparatus; (7)(6) reception means for receiving, from the selected ~~image-forming~~ external printing apparatus, availability information indicating whether or not the using of ~~for using~~ the selected ~~image-forming~~ external printing apparatus is allowed, wherein the availability information is determined based on the output of the user management information; and (8)(7) transmission control means for controlling

transmission such that the generated image signal is transmitted to the selected ~~image forming-external printing~~ apparatus, in accordance with the availability information.

According to another aspect of the present invention, an image reading method for controlling an image reading apparatus, connected to a plurality of ~~image forming-external printing~~ apparatuses via a network, includes the steps of: (1) reading an image and generating an image signal on the basis of reading the image; (2) selecting one from the plurality of ~~external printing image-forming~~ apparatuses ~~for receipt of the generated image signal~~; (3) receiving an input instruction indicating whether or not the input of user management information is necessary from the selected ~~image-forming external printing~~ apparatus; (4) ~~determining whether or not the input of the user management information is necessary, in accordance with the received input instruction~~; (5) controlling the input of the user management information so as to be inputted in accordance with the instruction result of the determination in the determining step; (6)(5) outputting the inputted user management information to the selected ~~image-forming external printing~~ apparatus; (7)(6) receiving from the selected ~~image-forming-external printing~~ apparatus, availability information indicating whether or not the for using of the selected image-formingexternal printing apparatus is allowed, wherein the availability information is determined based on the output of the user management information; and (8)(7) controlling transmission such that the generated image signal is transmitted to the selected ~~image-forming-external printing~~ apparatus, in accordance with the availability information.

According to still another aspect of the present invention, a computer readable memory storing a program executing an image reading method for controlling an

image reading apparatus, connected to a plurality of ~~image-forming external printing~~ apparatuses via a network, the program including: (1) code for reading an image and generating an image signal on the basis of reading the image; (2) code for selecting one from the plurality of ~~image-forming external printing~~ apparatuses ~~for receipt of the generated image signal~~; (3) code for receiving an input instruction indicating whether or not the input of user management information is necessary from the selected ~~image-forming external printing~~ apparatus; (4) ~~code for determining whether or not the input of the user management information is necessary, in accordance with the received input instruction~~; (5) code for controlling the input of the user management information so as to be inputted in accordance with the instruction ~~the result of the determination by the determination code~~; (6)(5) code for outputting the inputted user management information to the selected ~~image-forming external printing~~ apparatus; (7)(6) code for receiving from the selected ~~image-external printing~~ apparatus, availability information indicating whether or not the for using of the selected ~~image-forming external printing~~ apparatus is allowed, wherein the availability information is determined based on the output of the user management information; and (8)(7) code for controlling transmission such that the generated image signal is transmitted to the selected ~~image-forming external printing~~ apparatus, in accordance with the availability information.

The foregoing and other objects, advantages and features of the present invention will become more apparent from the following description of the preferred embodiments taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawings.--